

THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATIONISTS

Meeting of March 4, 2015 held at Monona Gardens, 6501 Bridge Road, Madison.

ARC President Laurel Steffes called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

38 people were in attendance. The choices offered and cost (with the number ordered) were: burger and fries, \$11.00 (9); fish sandwich and fries, \$12.00 (12); grilled chicken sandwich and fries, \$12.00 (4); Rueben sandwich and fries, \$13.00 (9); salmon salad, \$14 (4). Everyone also got a cup of delicious chicken noodle soup with their meal.

A moment of silence was observed for friends and family who have passed and for our troops who are serving in harm's way.

The February minutes were read and approved. Correction noted to the Frank n Miller report regarding returns.

Financial Report:

Paid \$420.00 to Monona Gardens for meals, tax and gratuity.

Opening balance on March 1 for Savings is \$223.31 and Checking is \$131.10.
Dividend on Savings account in March is \$.02.

Activity on Checking account for February:

DEPOSITS: \$44.00 proceeds from lunch.

EXPENDITURES: \$

Closing balance on March 1 for Savings is \$223.33 and Checking is \$

"Frank-n-Miller Report:"

Jim Miller said he is trying to get a speaker to discuss the Well Wisconsin program at one of our meetings. He has left messages for the person who is the DNR rep for the program. It's been 2 weeks and he hasn't heard back. He'll keep trying. If you complete the Well Wisconsin program, you'll get a \$150 Visa card, which is taxable income. Go to wellwisconsin.wi.gov to learn more. All health insurance plans offer the program.

Ed Frank said that dividends will be available in mid-March. They are being careful about gains in Variable, must have 2% gain before there will be a dividend increase, and it's going to be close. Probably a 2-3% increase for Core.

Old Business: none

New Business:

Tom Thoresen brought a resolution for the members to consider. Several changes in the Governor's budget proposal would affect DNR. He would like our organization to go on record as 1) opposing change to the status of Natural Resources Board from policy-making

to advisory, 2) opposing the moratorium on Stewardship spending, and 3) maintaining all positions in Science Services. President Steffes asked about the history of ARC taking a stand on such issues. Jim Miller said back in 2008 when DNR Secretary change was proposed (from NRB to Governor appointed) ARC members did go to the capitol and lobby the legislators. It is acceptable for us to weigh in, as long as no monetary contributions for lobbying or to campaigns comes out of member dues. Steffes called for a voice vote on whether or not to send a letter to Secretary of DOA, and members of Joint Finance Committee with the aforementioned issues raised. Seconded, and voice vote was unanimously in favor. Steffes will draft document, get approval from ARC Board and provide copy to members in case they want to make contacts with their representatives.

Conservation Lobby Day is April 14. Go to the League of Conservation Voters website for more information and to sign up. <http://conservationvoters.org/act/events/conservation-lobby-day-2015/>

President Steffes brought up the status of our checking and savings accounts. We have approximately \$350.00 available. Our major expenses annually are the webmaster service (\$550) and the \$75 donations made to Natural Resources Foundation in memory of deceased members (\$600 to NRF in 2014.) We have decreased expenses in recent years by the use of electronic distribution of flyers for picnic and holiday party, and we print far fewer directories now. Our sources of income are the new member dues (\$2) and the extra \$1 added to meals at monthly meetings. Members agreed that webmaster services are well worth it, and covered by income from meetings, but NRF donations can vary so we should think about ways to increase funds to insure we can continue to contribute. Some suggestions made were to temporarily increase the extra collected at meetings to \$2, increase the lifetime dues to \$5, and put out a contribution jar at meetings. Jim Miller said at one time, the donation to NRF was made from "pass the hat" contributions, but sometimes that didn't cover the amount so a decision was made that the donation would come from the ARC treasury. Steffes said that she welcomes any other ideas and will discuss making changes at the next meeting.

Community Shares of Wisconsin recognized member Paulette Harder with a Backyard Hero Award for her work as chair of board of the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice.

Deaths and Illnesses:

None reported.

Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Jerry and Sandy Rodenberg celebrate their 50th anniversary on March 13. Congrats!

Trips:

Laurel and Dick Steffes just got back from Egypt. Great trip! They felt very safe in the areas they visited, and remarked how surprised Egyptians were to see American tourists. Tourism there is down to only 10% of what it was before the political unrest.

Jokes:

Jim Miller shared a joke.

Meeting adjourned at 1:40 pm.